



## Cross country teams prepare for Pac-10 meet

The stretch run begins for the Oregon cross country team with the Pac-10 championships this weekend

By Robbie McCallum  
Oregon Daily Emerald

One of the last vestiges of the old-fashioned style of intercollegiate cross country is the conference championship race.

On a day when most NCAA Division I sports are moving towards BCS standings and postseason tournaments, the sport of cross country holds on to the traditions of years past.

The championship has little effect on the postseason. While small in comparison to high-caliber meets, the conference championships offer the Pacific-10 Conference schools a low-key meet prior to the ever-important Western Regional Meet two weeks later.

The meet also is a chance to garner bragging rights in the running world on the west coast. Rivalries between Oregon, Stanford and other Pac-10 powerhouses are rekindled there every year.

The No. 13 Ducks come into this season's conference championship in Seattle ranked third in the Pac-10.

"The conference meet doesn't have much standing as far as the NCAA meet, but it's a meet where teams want to do well," head coach Mar-

tin Smith said. "Momentum on a season depends on how well you do throughout the season and you want to keep doing well."

If Smith's team is to pull an upset and win the Pac-10 title, it must unseat perennial powerhouse Stanford and Arizona, the conference's defending champion.

Leading the Oregon pack are sophomore Jason Hartmann and senior Michael Kasahun. The duo has been impressive in both Oregon meets this season, placing in the top echelon of runners at the Roy Griak Invitational and the Pre-NCAA meet.

At the Pre-NCAA meet in Ames, Iowa, Hartmann and Kasahun finished fifth and sixth among Pac-10 runners while placing 30th and 36th, respectively.

The two will have plenty of competition despite the small field. The top returning Pac-10 runner is Stanford's Thomas Murley, who placed second at the Pre-NCAA meet. The Cardinal also features two Olympians in Gabe Jennings and Michael Stember.

Other competition includes Arizona's Mike Cramer, Arizona State's Garrett Jensen and California's

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■ The Duck Harriers will run their third 6,000-meter race this season at the Pacific-10 Conference championships

By Robbie McCallum  
Oregon Daily Emerald

The NCAA's switch from 5,000 meters to 6,000 meters as the standard distance in women's cross country has been a rough one for some teams — especially Oregon.

Last year, the NCAA cross country committee decided to lengthen the standard distance by 1,000 meters. Most applauded the move, saying it was the next logical step. But as more 6,000-meter races are run, coaches across the nation are finding that teams are responding in very different ways to the switch.

Oregon's inaugural 6,000-meter race was mediocre at best. Then ranked 12th in the nation, the Duck Harriers placed seventh at the Roy Griak Invitational in St. Paul, Minn.

Many of the Oregon runners misjudged the new distance and either faded in the last portion of the race or went out too conservatively.

Three weeks later, the Ducks, now ranked No. 22, traveled to Ames, Iowa for the Pre-NCAA meet. Their second 6,000 meter race of the season was even less successful, as the Ducks placed 21st. Although they beat out 35 other schools, Oregon lost credit with the NCAA selection com-

mittee by losing to teams ranked lower than the Ducks.

"We had an absolutely miserable performance at Pre-nationals," Oregon head coach Tom Heinonen said. "Our performance was far below our expectations. I think it was no indication of what we were capable of."

"We'll be very lucky to make the NCAA meet," Heinonen added. "It's still possible since 31 teams qualify, and we did beat a few teams that might help us later on."

The Ducks have not missed an NCAA meet since 1996 and have qualified for 23 of the last 25 meets.

The Ducks make their third venture on a 6,000 meter course this weekend at the Pacific-10 Conference championships in Seattle.

The women's race begins at 11 a.m. in Lincoln Park, near the Washington campus.

Although the meet does not count toward NCAA qualification, the Ducks have much to gain — or lose — at the meet.

"This is our chance to get back on track and near the big four teams in the conference," Heinonen said. "We want to make this be a good step towards regionals in two weeks."

The meet that counts toward NCAA qualification is the Western Regional meet on Nov. 11 in Fresno, Calif.

"If we can be a solid fifth at Western Regionals, we stand a much

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Oregon head coach

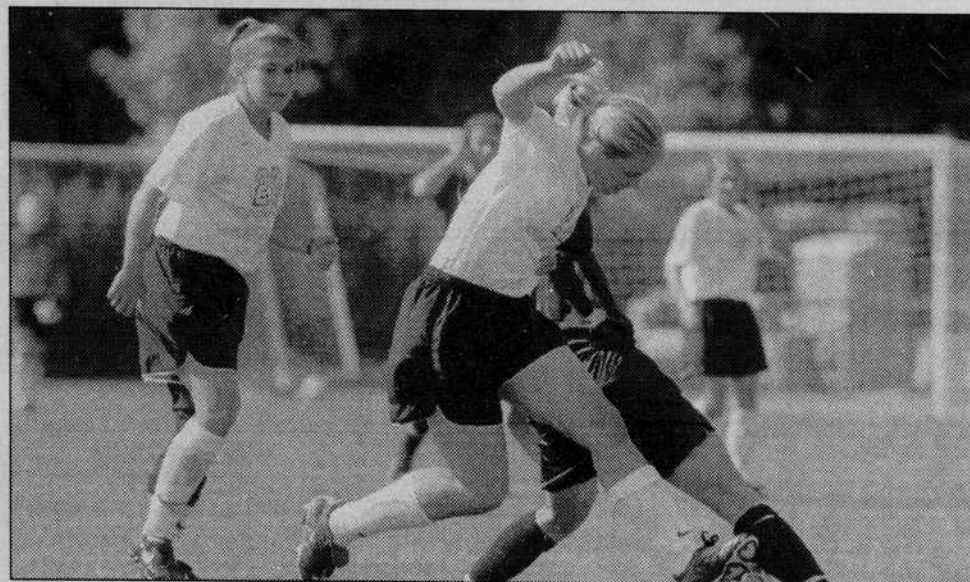


Photo by Emerald

Junior defender Molly Stemp (20), freshman midfielder/defender Ann Westermark and the rest of the Ducks are ready to tangle it up with their Northwest rivals in the final home games of the 2000 season.

## Energized Ducks may have a surprise for Pac-10 foes

■ The Oregon volleyball squad will put its confidence and two-match winning streak on the line against No. 4 USC and No. 8 UCLA

By Adam Jude  
Oregon Daily Emerald

"Why not this week?"

Those were the words uttered by Oregon head coach Carl Ferreira in reference to his team's tough, two-game home stand, which begins tonight against Southern California.

Why can't the Ducks compete with No. 4 USC and No. 8 UCLA in the sweet confines of McArthur Court?

While it may seem improbable for the Ducks (9-10 overall, 1-9 Pac-10) to defeat two of the country's finest, Ferreira said he has been emphasizing to his team that nothing is impossible.

"It's my job to make this team believe that they can beat them," Oregon's first-year coach said. "If we can understand that, and continue to work hard and execute, we can be successful."

The new and improved Ducks — who are re-energized after sweeping Oregon State and California-Riverside last weekend — can't wait to show the Los Angeles kids their fresh attitude.

"Most teams don't expect much from Oregon volley-

ball," junior outside hitter Monique Tobbagi said. "Most people think they can just roll over us. But they're in for a big surprise this week."

In the first road trip of the season, the Ducks showed little competition against the Pac-10's top teams, getting swept in both matches. The loss at UCLA (14-5, 9-2) was Oregon's most disappointing performance of the season, Ferreira said.

"When we went down there, we were still stinging a bit from the first three conference losses," Ferreira said. "Against UCLA we had our worst day of the year, there's no doubt about that."

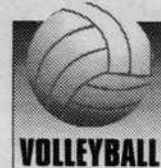
As a team, the Ducks hit just .041 from the floor against UCLA — their worst hitting percentage of the season.

"We're anxious to face UCLA again," Tobbagi said.

UCLA showcases one of the nation's best talents in junior hitter Kristee Porter. She leads the Pac-10 in kills and is a National Player of the Year candidate.

Additionally, the Bruins' Elisabeth Bachman's 1.41

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### On Tap

Who: Oregon volleyball vs. USC, UCLA  
When: Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m.  
Where: McArthur Court

## Washington schools visit UO

The Ducks look to give their fans a treat in their final two home games of the season

By Peter Hockaday  
Oregon Daily Emerald

There will be plenty of emotion flowing out on Papé Field this weekend.

First off, the Oregon soccer team (4-11-1, 1-3-1 Pac-10) will face Washington State (10-5-0, 2-4-0) today in a game that has traditionally been a 90-minute battle.

Sunday, the Ducks will face the second-best team in the country — Washington (15-1-0, 6-0-0) — in its last home game of the year. It will mark the final time that the four seniors on the team will play in front of their fans.

### On Tap

Who: Oregon soccer vs. Washington State, Washington  
When: Friday at 3 p.m., Sunday at 1 p.m.  
Where: Papé Field

The Ducks will try to create a little excitement in a season that has been simply mediocre up to this point.

"It's going to be a challenge for us," said Chalise Baysa, the team's leading scorer. "And it's about time we step up to the challenge."

The emotion and intensity the

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